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MAN AND BEAST.

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MAN AND BEAST.

God said [to man], Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. — GEN. i. 28.

WE must not forget our relation to these companions of ours in the animal world.

You will remember what I said here, a few weeks ago, of Professor Shaler's remarkable book on the domestic animals.

He shows, in some details of great interest, that the tribes and races of men who have taken animals into their charge have been those which have risen from stage to stage in social order, so that they are the ruling peoples of the world to-day. On the other hand, to say of a tribe or race that it has no domestic animals is to say that it is on a very low grade of civilization. Such tribes are the people our fathers found in New England, are the Indians in some valleys of the Rocky mountains, and many of the people of the South Sea islands.

Now the relations of man and beast are not simply historical. They have a great deal to do with our character and life to-day. I spoke of

them here the other day, in giving to our own children some advice about their use of the summer in the country; and again when I was talking to our young friends, the Asylum children, in their new home at Lexington, I tried to make them see the importance of their life with their pet animals. There is not one of us but has duties or privileges growing out of such relations of ours with the rest of the animal world. Now that we are about to part, for that summer life which will bring us into closer acquaintance with horses and dogs and cats and cows and oxen and sheep and rabbits and barnyard fowl and robins and orioles and bobolinks and blackbirds and the rest, I want to speak of that acquaintance.

It covers interests far more important than the whims of our amusement, or any low matters of appetite or profit. National character results from the cruelty or the tenderness of the character of separate men and women. Our personal characters are strong or weak, according as we have learned, in dealing with others, to control ourselves. And these others may be our dogs or our cats, our horses or our oxen. It is not simply our affairs with men and women which form our characters. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast." And the converse will generally prove to be as true — that the man who has trained himself to patience and self-control in the management of his horse or his ox will find that by "reason of use" he has trained

himself to like self-control in his dealings with men and women and children.

Professor Shaler's historical statement carries him back to such lives as those of Abraham, and Lot, and Melchizedek, the peaceful king, as they herded their camels and sheep, and as they trained and bred their horses and mares. Here came in the whole idea of property; with property came the enlargement and systematizing of law. There came in also the enormous addition to the results of man's industry, so evident when one compared his work of a day in ploughing, when he had yoked his oxen and with them broken up the sward, against the day's work of his brother who had broken his ground only with a mattock and a hoe. To this daily creation of wealth, to which the brutes helped man, the only analogy in history is in the similar victories of this century, in which Steam, the conquered and tamed giant of our time, — the child of the Sunlight and Heat, packed away in the coal-beds of the past, leaves man free to his nobler devices, while it quarries the rock for him, or grinds the corn, or pumps the water. The tribe which had a herd of camels or of oxen commanded more of nature's resources than the tribe which worked with its hands. It was richer and so it was stronger.

All this we now take for granted. "Of course, of course," we say. "It would be madness to try to live without these creatures." But we must

not, in this cavalier way, pass by the character of our duties to them, and the reflex good which they have brought to man, taking care of him, as I have a right to say, while he takes care of them. Dr. Whewell, the Master of Trinity, in his treatise on Moral Science, — which, one is glad to say, is already well forgotten, — was hardy enough to take the ground that the birds and beasts have no rights at all. But even he asked that they might be treated humanely, because cruelty would be bad for the men and women who were cruel. The truth is, however, to be found in a much higher range than this poor theory of self-culture. In this great ordering of animal life the man takes care of the ox and the ox breaks the prairie for the man, the man harvests the corn and the horse takes it to the market. Here another man buys the corn to scatter it to his fowls, and the fowls eat the corn and return so many eggs for it as their share of the bargain. All this great system of life, interwoven of the energy of man and beast and fowl, means and requires that each shall be loyal and steady in his part of the contract. It demands then of the child of God that he shall hold to his divine or godlike position in the transaction. There is no danger in our accepting the simple statement of the book of Genesis, that man should rule over every living thing. Man is their ruler — if you please, he is their God. As the centuries go by, it proves that

with his care they multiply, without his care they die. If he says they shall increase, they increase. If he is selfish and indolent and neglects them, they perish. Distinctly, unequivocally, he rejects his master rights as a divinity when he is cruel to these subjects of his kingdom. He must not destroy them, no, nor pain them, without just motive, while he stands in this noble relation to them as their sovereign.

The terrible retributions which have followed where man was false to this position have been well illustrated by Mr. Shaler. I cited one of them here the other day. It is the story told in the steady pressing back by the German chivalry of the forces of the Turkish invaders, in those centuries which forced the Turks back towards their lairs in Asia. Man for man, these hordes of Eastern invaders were as good fighters and as strong men as the men of Europe. The steel of their lances was as keen, and the flight of their arrows was as sure. But the horses trained for centuries — ah, the horses were not alike nor the same! The horses of Europe had been trained for centuries under conditions imposed by Christian law. Their birth had been governed and they had been attended by men who had foresight and purpose gained from truth and hope. Year by year, generation by generation, the horses had grown in strength and in weight, they had improved in form and gained in bottom. The Cossack horses had to take the

chances of life among such selfish, faithless, God-defying barbarians as the Kurds who are killing the Armenians while I speak to you; and in the shock between the horses of Christianity and the horses of barbarism, the hordes of the Asiatics gave way. So far as we know, we owe the Europe of to-day to those centuries of care and thought and love, of patience and tenderness, which gave the courageous charger of western Europe this victory over his weaker kindred from western Asia.

Now these are not the entertaining fireside stories of romances. We will not set them by so conveniently. The strength of men to-day, or the power of a town or a state, or, in the aggregate, the character of a nation, — where do these come from? Infallibly, without exception, the strength we prize is born from law, it is the result of men's self-control. The man has been obedient to law; therefore he is strong. Or the town has dealt justly by every citizen, there has been no mob and no lynching, no boycotting, no man has lifted his hand against his neighbor; therefore the town is strong. Or of the state men say proudly, "These people were their own rulers. There was no boss nor ring. The people made laws. The people enforced laws. The people were self-controlled. Therefore the people were strong." And of the nation we say, "Blessed is the country, yea, blessed is that people, whose God is the Lord." Its God is not Moloch or Baal,

not the cruel God or the lustful. Its God is not Mammon, he is not named Augustus or Tiberius. Its God is the Lord, the Power who makes for righteousness, the Father of these children.

Strength comes from such obedience to law. It comes from self-control.

Now when, in a fit of ill-temper, I strike my horse a heavy blow, I am losing my own hold of these infinite resources. I am asking every one who sees me to rebel in like wise. The boy who throws a kitten from the window to see the poor creature's terror is, in the same way, barbarizing himself. The smart teamster at the cattle show, when he loses his temper and his prize together because his cattle do not understand him, is paying the penalty for his negligence or his *hauteur* some day when he and his oxen were alone together at their work in the field. Nay, the woman who has counted the life of a mother-bird as of no consequence, so she had her prized white egret from a heron, must not be surprised some horrid day when she finds that some Goneril or Regan of her own children, bred in her example and selfish in her selfishness, turns her back upon an aged mother. For we stand or fall together. If one member suffer, all suffer — men, horses, oxen, birds, children, women; for centuries on centuries have made of us one great family. I cannot say "I have no need of him." He dares not say he has no need of me.

In the early days of Darwinism, some one asked our dear Dr. Bartol, in my hearing, if he were not pained to be told that he descended from an ape. The reply was in a flash: "Not at all; I am reminded rather that I descend from an angel as well." We must remember that the gentle affections, the obedient spirit, the gregarious mutual love of these inferior creatures are such as angels may be proud to assimilate, and to make their own. "I may have acquired the love of order and symmetry when I was a bee." These were Dr. Palfrey's words half a century ago. "I may have learned patience and perseverance when I was a fox." No one of us will watch the patient birds taking care of the voracious little ones in their nest, no one of us will watch a shepherd dog counting his sheep and lambs, and keeping count of them as he brings them home from pasture, without asking the good God, from whom we are born, and by whom they are taught, to give us like tenderness and zeal.

For you and me, who may not play with our pets as the children do, we are to see to it that in our personal range of power, certainly in our presence, no man strikes unfairly or pains without reason his horse or his ox, his cow or his ass, his dog or his cat. For the children, we are to see that they grow up in hatred of the idea of killing for killing's sake, gentle and loving to their playmates and pets. We have to see that with every

day they learn something new of the graces and joys of these wonderful companions by whom we are surrounded. They ought to be glad to come in and tell us of the tenderness of the humming-bird for its little ones, of the gallantry with which the partridge protects hers, of the skill with which the fishes beneath the water arrange their nests and care for their offspring. A man cannot take a walk across the downs without feeling that he is a very god to the faithful dog who follows him, who watches for his every signal and obeys his unspoken thought. And when that faithful, loving creature lies upon the door-mat after the tramp is over, can that man go back to feeding his own hunger and thirst without asking himself of his own obedience to his own God; — if he have been listening to God's whispers, thinking God's thoughts, and engaging himself as a child should do, and as a dog does, in his God's concerns? I stood with my friend by the dead body of his beautiful horse. The noble creature was born from a mother who had carried my friend in battle. She had never shrunk though she knew there was danger, and in the smoke and dust of conflict if the order was for "Column forward!" she too had obeyed and led the way. "And he is worthy such a mother!" said my friend to me. "Summer and winter has he borne me, and in his dumb way he has never flinched in what he supposed to be his duty. He has done what he

supposed was my wish." As an epitaph for that noble creature were written the noble words, "He did the thing that he was set to do," an epitaph fit for a prophet, a discoverer, an inventor, a poet, or a hero. There is not a man or woman of us who might not be proud to earn such an epitaph, though we learned it in the silent obedience of the horse we mounted. We must see that our children learn such lessons of simple loyalty to Him from whose love it comes that they are living, and into whose joy they have a right to enter.

In what we call civilization, the lowest savages prove to be the men and women who have grown up in the squalor of the crowded cities. Professor Shaler reminds us that in riots and massacres, in the horrors of St. Bartholomew, in the cruelties of the French Revolution, the lowest traits of brutality have been shown by the men and women of the cities. The peasants of the country, he says, are more humane. They have been educated to control themselves in their rule over the lower animals. But the boy or girl who has grown up in the slums of Paris or London, of New York or Chicago, has had no such humanizing training.

Not more than one person in thirty in any of the larger cities has any responsible care for the life of an animal. The danger of cities, then, in this regard, is that they cannot give men their best training for humanity. No! nor women nor

children, either. As the summer comes on, it is for you and me to break this malign spell, as far as we can, by such devices as the country week or the summer outing, by any device which will bring men and women face to face with nature, and in tender and homelike intimacy with God. Here He is, caring even for the birds of the field; He is watching the cattle on a thousand hills; He is glad because the little lambs are glad, and the wild creatures who run to and fro in the forest. No one of them is too small for His care. Nay! their love of their homes and their little ones is of kindred with His love for His children. And you and I, as we leave the asphalt behind us and step upon the turf, as we leave rattle and clatter behind us and, in the glad stillness of field or forest, listen to God's whisper, we shall find that that whisper is always of Love, Love, Love. And it begs us to care for beast and bird with tenderness like His tenderness, with gratitude for His untiring watchfulness. In this grace also we are to grow, so that for these, His humbler creatures, for whom His care is fresh every morning, we also, with His love, may care.

IN MEMORY OF FITZ,

WHO DIED IN HARNESS.

Here, where he fell, our noble friend shall lie,
Where the last course of willing life was run;
Life's work was ended and its duty done;
So men should bury soldiers, where they die!
Born from the blood of battle, with the name
Which battle honored and which heroes gave,
He leaves no memory of sloth or shame
To be recounted by his sylvan grave.
True to his master, to his service true,
The work he had to do was finished well;
So let these rustling rhododendrons tell
"Fitz did the work that he was set to do."
Service is royal when so truly tried,
He lived obedient and obedient died.